

BENIN ENGLISH TEACHERS' AWARENESS OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL VALUES OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the level of awareness of Benin English teachers regarding the importance of classroom observations in their professional growth. It should be placed in the general context of what are being done to gear the English language teaching in Benin towards successful and effective oral and written communication. It also aims at developing critical thinking ability in each teacher. The degree of Benin English teachers' involvement in their personal development through classroom observations was gauged through a questionnaire. One hundred and eighteen teachers were randomly selected to participate in the survey. The investigation revealed that teachers do not have common practice of classroom observation. They have judgmental and punitive views on it. To restore the place of classroom observations in the process of Benin teachers' professional growth, the study showed their beneficial aspects and also suggested some strategies for their full integration into in-service teachers' habits.

KEYWORDS: Classroom Observation; Self Observation; Peer Observation & Teacher Development

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INTRODUCTION

Education cannot be effective without teaching, learning and evaluation; and teachers in charge of education have to be trained so as to be qualified. But training is not the only aspect of the qualification. Teacher development (another aspect of teacher's qualification) is of a paramount importance in so far as it makes it possible for teachers to grow professionally. Teacher development requires a variety of approaches teachers can use to enhance their teaching beliefs, attitudes, and practices.

The concept of teacher development is tightly connected to the one of awareness of teaching, the latter being popularized by Gebhard (1992, 2005). Awareness of teaching can be defined as knowing that teacher development is a reality forever new, an endless growth through problem solving and an ongoing commitment. Awareness of teaching can be gained through the following approaches: observation of other teachers' teaching, self-observation, action research, and teacher journals.

This paper focuses on two approaches to teacher development: self-observation and observation of other teachers' teaching. Our interest in these two approaches lies in the fact that they are not new to teachers. Moreover, they stand for the starting point of any initiative of professional growth. Through observation, teachers can learn about themselves and their peers. Then they can critically think about what they have observed and take decisions (Action research). The teacher can also write what he/she has noticed in his teaching or the teaching of others in his journal (teacher journals), share with his fellows and then they think collectively to find solutions to their problems. Once more the position of observation as the starting point in any teacher development process is fully noticeable.

But in Benin secondary schools, it has been noticed that initiatives for classroom observations nowadays are rare. Classroom observations seem to be the job of teaching advisors and inspectors only, and even at that level, it is rare and looks boring and judgmental from the teacher's standpoint. This fact can be illustrated through the following anecdote:

A teacher (a part-time teacher) one day called his headmaster to inform him that he was sick and couldn't attend class. A few minutes later, he called again telling the headmaster, he would come and spend even an hour with his students for revision, since the first test-exam was at hand. The headmaster was very glad, since there was in the school a Teaching Adviser who was looking for a teacher to be visited. Then the headmaster informed the teacher and asked him to hurry up. The teacher replied that he had changed his mind, and added that he had to go back home so as to take care of him.

To understand and explain why teachers show reluctance to classroom observations, we put forward and tested the following hypothesis: Beninese teachers do not practice and care about classroom observations because they have negative representations of those activities. In other words, they are not sensitized on the contribution of classroom observations to their professional growth.

The main target to be achieved through this study is to raise Beninese English teachers' awareness of the concept of Teacher Development, and make them internalize it in their daily teaching practices through its approaches such as self-observation and observation of peers. In other words, we intend to make classroom observations a learning experience where teachers become reflective by learning to evaluate their own lessons, their teaching practices, as well as their observations of colleagues' lessons.

This paper is organized into six sections. After the introductory paragraph (first section), we define some key concepts like teacher development, peer observation and self observation (second section). The third section is concerned with the description of the participants, of the data collection instrument and the data collection and process procedures. The fourth section covers the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings; the fifth section is concerned with discussions; and the last section is conclusive.

THEORETICAL KEYSTONES

Teacher Development

"What can I do to make my teaching practice better?" Such question, when put by a teacher, marks the starting point of his/her will to grow professionally. Different from teacher training, teacher development means growth, change, improvement, etc. In the words of Evans (2002, p.131), teacher development stands for "the process whereby teachers' professionalism and/or professionalism may be considered to be enhanced". He defines *professionalism* as "an ideologically-, attitudinally-, intellectually- and epistemologically-based stance on the part of an individual, in relation to the practice of the profession to which s/he belongs, and which influences her/his professional practice" (p. 130).

Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is an academic activity whereby a teacher is visited by a peer teacher or student teacher (also called pre-service teacher), an inspector, a teaching advisor, members of the school administration or an examining board. Williams (1989, p.85) notes that

Classroom observations generally form a part of any teacher training programme, whether initial training or in-service training. These observations are generally based on the

assumption that teachers should put into practice what they have learnt on their course, and the trainer's role is to judge whether what has been taught has in fact been carried out properly.

Classroom observation has three main purposes: summative, formative and research. A summative observation is an evaluation, which rates the teacher who is being observed. It can be done for administrative or supervisory reports for the purpose of job retention, promotion, salary increases, etc. A formative observation aims at helping teachers to beautify their lessons and their teaching practices through observations of each other's classes and exchange among themselves. Research observation is what happens when a researcher uses classroom observation as research instrument to collect data on a particular subject he/she is investigating.

Observation of other Teachers' Teaching

Also called teacher-to-teacher observation or peer observation, observation of other teachers' teaching refers to a visit of a colleague, a fellow teacher watching a class so as to gain understanding of some aspect of teaching, learning, or classroom interaction. Through this observation, observers gain in learning from the strengths and weaknesses, the successes and errors of the visited colleagues. Teachers can see their own teaching in the teaching of others, and when teachers observe others to gain self knowledge, they have the chance to construct and reconstruct their own knowledge (Gebhard 1992).

Peer observation has three steps: pre-observation conference, classroom observation and post-observation conference.

Pre-Observation Conference

Pre-observation start from the moment when the visitor informs the visited teacher of his/her project of visiting him/her and the purpose of the visit. They mutually agree upon a date and a time for the classroom visit. From a genuine professional growth purpose, the observer is not someone who aims at catching the visited teacher in wrong teaching practice acts. He/She shouldn't, as it is common practice in Benin secondary schools, come in a given classroom and tell the teacher that he/she has come for a classroom visit. This is against the point of view of Williams (1989, p.85), when he argues that

Classroom visits should [...] provide an opportunity for teachers to develop their own judgements of what goes on in their own classrooms, should sharpen their awareness of what their pupils are doing and the interactions that take place in their classes, and heighten their ability to evaluate their own teaching practices. In other words, these visits should as far as possible be *developmental* rather than judgemental.

At the d-day, there is a pre-observation conference. The colleague observer and the teacher observed share information concerning the class goals, students, and particular teaching style. This step is of paramount importance to Richards (n. d.) when he emphasizes that

Prior to each observation, the two teachers would meet to discuss the nature of the class to be observed, the kind of material being taught, the teachers' approach to teaching, the kinds of students in the class, typical patterns of interaction

and class participation, and any problems that might be expected. The teacher being observed would also assign the observer a goal for the observation and a task to accomplish. The task would involve collecting information about some aspect of the lesson, but would not include any evaluation of the lesson. Observation procedures or instruments to be used would be agreed upon during this session.

An interview schedule provides a brief, structured way of obtaining such information and includes the following questions¹:

- Briefly, what will be happening in the class I will observe?
- What is your goal for the class? What do you hope students will gain from this session?
- What do you expect students to be doing in class to reach stated goals?
- What can I expect you to be doing in class? What role will you take? What teaching methods will you use?
- What have students been asked to do to prepare for this class?
- What was done in earlier classes to lead up to this one?
- Will this class be generally typical of your teaching? If not, what will be different?
- Is there anything in particular that you would like me to focus on during the class?

The pre-observation step ends as soon as the teacher introduces, installs his/her visitor and opens the class.

Classroom Observation

At this level, the observer visits his/her colleague's class and pay attention on what they agree on during the pre-observation conference. Among other things, the observer should focus on knowledge of subject matter, organization and clarity, command and communication of subject matter, teacher-student rapport, enthusiasm, students' behavior, etc. (from *Guideline for Classroom Observation*). In order to be more systematic, observers should make use of observation instruments such as checklists, tally sheet, audio recorder, video recorder, etc. (Gebhard 1992).

A checklist can be used by the observer to check off teaching behaviors as they occur. A checklist includes the different processes, instruments, and tasks the teacher avails himself of to conduct a given lesson. In front of each task, a space is reserved to mention if "Yes" or "No" a given task is fulfilled. The checklist in Appendix A has been used for observing vocabulary lessons; whereas the one in Appendix B has been used to check EFL teachers' level in English phonetics and phonology and how they manage pronunciation difficulties in their EFL classrooms.

A tally sheet works like a checklist, except that each time a behavior is observed, a tally mark (/) is used. The example in Appendix C is a tally sheet designed by a teacher while teaching a contemporary American literature course in Hungary. It aimed at better understanding his questioning behaviors (Gebhard 1992, p. 3).

Audio and video recorders make it possible to video- or audiotape a class and then use the tape to review what went on in the class. Much can be learned simply from listening to an audiotape or viewing a videotape of another teacher's class, especially if the observer took notes while doing the original observation. For example, an observer might

¹ These questions and the other in this section are taken from *Guideline for Classroom Observation* retrieved September 10, 2012, from http://www.teachingandlearning.illinois.edu/pdf/Sorcinelli_Observation_Guide.pdf

become interested in the way the teacher gives instructions. Thus, while reviewing the taped class, special attention can be given to relevant parts of the tape, and additional notes can be taken on how instructions were given.

Post-Observation Conference

Immediately after the observation or within a few days, both visitor and teacher observed should meet and evaluate what have occurred during the class, regarding what they have agreed on during the pre-observation conference. The visitor presents the results of his/her observation and together they reflect on them. The following questions can help to better conduct the session.

- In general, how did you feel the class went?
- How did you feel about your teaching during the class?
- Did students accomplish the goals you had planned for this class?
- Is there anything that worked well for you in class today that you particularly liked? Does that usually go well?
- Is there anything that did not work well-that you disliked about the way the class went? Is that typically a problem area for you?
- What were your teaching strengths? Did you notice anything you improved on or any personal goals you met?
- What were your teaching problems- areas that still need improvement?
- Do you have any suggestions or strategies for improvement?

The post-observation conference is not an occasion for the visitor to show that he/she knows everything, and the teacher observed knows nothing. A visitor, even if he/she is an inspector learns something from a classroom observation, otherwise he/she is selfish and has missed his/her target. As Çakir (2010, p.5) puts, “people improve and develop best through the comments and knowledge of others unless they are offensive and insulting”. Once they exchange in a friendly atmosphere, visitor and teacher observed take note of the fruits of their reflection and plan other classroom observations for what needs to be beautified. The positive outcomes of the classroom observation can be shared with other colleagues who face similar difficulties. This make a cycle as it is presented below:

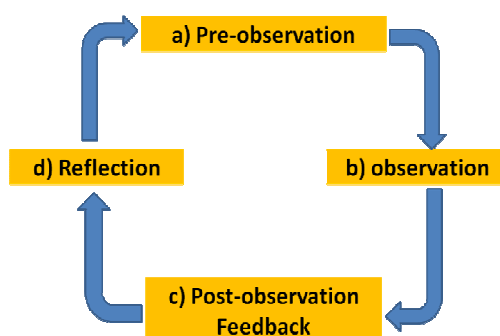


Figure 1: Observation Cycle

Self-Observation

Self-observation is the process whereby the same person observes his/her own class. Teachers can observe themselves by video- or audio taping their own teaching, and review the tape while using a tally sheet or taking descriptive

notes or making short transcripts of the classroom interaction to study. Gebhard (1992, p.3) suggests the following steps that can be followed to undertake self-observation:

- video- or audiotape the classes,
- Use the tapes to reflect on your teaching by applying observation instruments (checklist, tally sheet, etc.),
- While viewing or listening the tapes, keep track of what you want to measure through the instruments you have chosen.

An advantage of self-observation is that it is easier than observing other teachers because:

Teachers can move freely around the classroom, as they are not guests who need to adjust to the classroom life of other teachers;

Teachers also have more freedom to select aspects of teaching in which they are interested, and they can guide their observations according to their own history, interests, and instincts (Gebhard 1992, p.4).

However, this same strength found in self-observation can also be a limitation. This is because it is not necessarily easy to face one.

METHODS

Participants

One hundred and eighteen teachers (28 females and 90 males) in classroom situations have participated in this study. There were 58 full time teachers (15 females and 43 males) and 60 part-time teachers (13 females and 47 males). Their average age was 34.73 (Standard Deviation: 5.317), ranging from 22 to 53 years old. Their teaching experience average was 8.96 (SD: 4.045), ranging from 5 to 23 years. 58 participants' schools were near the head office, 35 work in schools that are far and 25 taught in schools that are very far. The academic and professional qualifications of the participants are summarized in the following tables.

Table 1: Participants' Highest Academic Qualifications

		Respondent's Highest Academic Degree					Total
		Licence	Maîtrise	Master	DEA	Doctorat	
Teacher Category of the Respondents	Full Time Teachers	22	32	2	0	2	58
	Part Time Teachers	25	31	1	3	0	60
Total		47	63	3	3	2	118

Table 2: Participants' Highest Professional Qualifications

		Respondent's Highest Professional Degree			Total
		none	BAPES	CAPES	
Teacher Category of the Respondents	Full Time Teachers	3	41	14	58
	Part Time Teachers	51	4	5	60
Total		54	45	19	118

Material for Data Collection

Data were collected through a questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire was concerned with general information about the respondents: names (optional), genders, ages, addresses, categories (full time or part-time teacher),

highest academic and professional degrees, teaching experiences, and the schools where they teach. The second part was about the average of classroom observations benefited by participants in 2016-2017 and during the five previous years, respectively; their experience in self and peer observations and their reactions to some statements related to classroom observation practices in Benin.

Procedures of Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected during teachers' weekly seminars. We met the Vice Principal and the English Head Teacher of each of the 24 secondary schools that we covered. The Head Teacher collected the questionnaires and, after he/she and his/her peer had filled them, he/she sent them back to his/her Vice Principal who transmitted them to the researchers. We have to mention that some teachers didn't return back their questionnaires; some were reluctant to fill out their questionnaire on the spot. The secondary schools are located in the Ouémé district (in the south of Benin). Data were collected in October and November 2017, and were processed with IBM SPSS Statistics 23.

RESULTS

The results are presented according to the five questions of the questionnaire: the number of classroom observations received in 2016-2017 and who were the visitors; the number of classroom observations received in the period of 2012-2017 and who were the visitors; participants' experience in self and peer observations; observation practices in Benin secondary schools; and teachers' appreciations of classroom observation practices in Benin secondary schools.

Classroom Observation Visits Received by Participants in 2016-2017

The number of classroom observation benefitted by the participants in one academic year is summarized in the following table.

Table 3: Classroom Observation Averages in One Academic Year

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Number of Inspector's Visit to the Respondents in 2016-2017	118	0	5	0.28	0.639
Number of Teaching Advisor's Visit to the Respondents in 2016-2017	118	0	5	0.60	0.898
Number of Head of Teacher's Visit to the Respondents in 2016-2017	118	0	4	0.19	0.598
Number of Colleague's Visit to the Respondents in 2016-2017	118	0	6	0.16	0.640
Number of Other Visit to the Respondents in 2016-2017	118	0	1	0.01	0.092
Valid N (list wise)	118				

From the table above, one can conclude that classroom observations are not common practices. The number of classroom observations per teacher in one academic year is extremely low.

Classroom observations, visits received by participants in the period of 2012-2017

Data related to classroom observations in the period of five years are summarized in the table below. The general tendency concerning classroom observations as noticed through the table is very low. Visits are mainly made by Teaching Advisors. As to teachers, they do not commonly take the initiative for classroom observations.

In the Benin educational system, classroom observations are mainly carried out by inspectors and teaching advisors. In that perspective, classroom observation has a summative purpose. It is then far from being a development tool. This shows the reason why teacher does not plan to visit their peers. Moreover, teachers do not practice peer observations because we are in a country where elders (those who have high teaching experience), cannot be visited by newly qualified teachers. Who are the latter to notice flaws in the teaching practice of someone who have started teaching when they were in primary school? This is one of the obstacles to peer observation.

Table 4: Classroom Observation Averages in a Period of Five Years

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Number of Inspector's Visit to the Respondents in 2012-2017	118	0	8	0.97	1.358
Number of Teaching Advisor's Visit to the Respondents in 2012-2017	118	0	22	2.01	2.815
Number of Head of Teacher's Visit to the Respondents in 2012-2017	118	0	11	0.42	1.186
Number of Colleague's Visit to the Respondents in 2012-2017	118	0	15	0.47	1.545
Number of Other Visit to the Respondents in 2012-2017	118	0	1	0.01	0.092
Valid N (listwise)	118				

Participants' Experience in Self and Peer Observations

Concerning self and peer observations, the study shows that this is not common practice. Self observation seems to be unknown to participants. This can be read through the results displayed in the table below.

Table 5: Participants' Practices of Self and Peer Observations

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Number of Self Observation Carried by the Respondent	118	0	2	0.07	0.313
Number of Peer Observation Carried by the Respondent	118	0	22	1.39	2.321
Valid N (listwise)	118				

Observation Practices in Benin Secondary Schools

All of the respondents mentioned that in cases of formative classroom observations, the visited teacher is never informed in advance and there is no pre-observation conference. Classroom observations in the Beninese school authorities and teachers' behavior include observations and post-observation conferences. The developmental value of such observation has been then questioned since the teacher to be observed is caught by surprise. There is no agreement on the objectives of the observed classes, and consequently post-observation conferences are most of the times, compilations of criticism. Expressing their opinion about how classroom observations are carried, two respondents wrote:

I think that normally, teachers must be informed in advance of any classroom visits and observations. This will help the teacher to prepare himself/herself for it. As far as I am concerned, I was visited once and I was not informed in advance. When the inspector came in, my learners were going through an evaluation. Then he had to wait till the end of the

evaluation that lasted 30 minutes. He just got back without a real classroom observation. He then concluded that he would not have wasted his time if I had been informed in advance.

(Source: our survey, 8th November, 2017)

The second Respondent Wrote This

The way classroom visits and observations in Benin secondary schools are organized and conducted cannot promote a good teaching – learning – evaluation processes. There are some teaching advisors and inspectors who really frighten visited teachers. They come as rather, judges than advisors. I strongly wish they would change positively for the safe of our educational system. (Source: our survey, 8th November, 2017)

Participants' Appreciation of Some Classroom Observation Practices in Benin Secondary Schools

Here, participants reacted to five statements by rating them. They had to choose among Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree and Strongly Agree. The five statements are presented as follows:

Statement a: The way teacher visits and observations are organized in Benin secondary schools lead to frustration and resentment.

Statement b: Classroom visits and observations in Benin secondary schools promote teacher evaluation and professional growth.

Statement c: Classroom observations in Benin secondary schools are intimidating.

Statement d: Classroom visits and observations in Benin secondary schools are productive, constructive and positive.

Statement e: Classroom visits and observations in Benin secondary schools are judgmental.

The statements above can be divided into two parts. Statements a, c and e are negative aspects of classroom observation practices; whereas Statements b and d stand for its positive aspects. Through the results (see details in Appendix E) the high tendencies show that 50.8% agree with Statement b and 49.2% agree with Statement d; whereas 39% somewhat agree with Statement a, 43.2% somewhat agree with Statement c and 37.3% agree with Statement e. The main conclusion that can be derived from the respondents' viewpoints is that classroom observation practices in Benin secondary schools are judgmental. Notwithstanding that aspect, the way classroom observations are carried out somewhat contribute to teacher evaluation and professional growth.

DISCUSSIONS

The results displayed in Table 3 and Table 4 cannot actually make it possible to conclude that classroom observations and visits promote teacher development. As one respondent mentioned “normally, teachers should have classroom observations each year, but unfortunately they don't for many years. I do not know if it is because of the number of inspectors and advisors. I suggest that each year, a teacher should have at least one visit. This will help him/her to know what is good or bad in his/her teaching practices” (Source: our survey, 8th November, 2017).

The main people in charge of classroom observations as planned by Benin educational authorities are the Teaching Advisors. To understand the factors that explain the scarcity of classroom observation, we are going to focus on two points: the number of teaching advisors and the means they are availed of to achieve their goals, and the distance between the schools and the DIPIQ2.

The number of teaching advisors in the *Ouémé* region is six (6) for a total number of eighty-four (84) secondary schools. It is altogether clear that the ratio Teaching Advisors/Number of schools is not in favour of frequent visits to teachers in classroom situation. Moreover, Teaching Advisors are not in charge of visiting only; they still have their own classroom where they teach.

The next is the distance between schools and the office that coordinates the activities of inspectors and Teaching Advisors. As shown in Figure 2, the number of teachers that had received one or two visits during 2016-2017 lowers when the distance increases. This raises the problem of means of transport. As a matter of fact and at many occasions, Teaching Advisors and inspectors travel with their own cars or even on motorcycles for classroom observations. The risk of accident is great in such circumstances, and the will to cover a long distance on the wane.

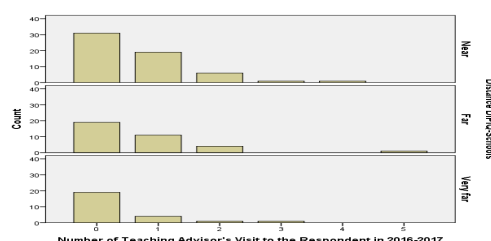


Figure 2: Influence of the Distance over the Number of Classroom Observations

CONCLUSIONS

Classroom observation is an important tool for teacher development. Being professionally qualified is not enough to be an excellent teacher. Teacher development approaches –that is self-observation, peer observation, action research, teacher journals, case studies, team-teaching, coaching, teaching portfolios, etc “can provide a way for us to identify problems in our teaching, as well as ways to solve these problems, and this process can provide us with much awareness about our teaching” (Gebhard 2005, p. 65).

This study has revealed that Benin English teachers do not benefit from the developmental power of classroom observation. This teacher development tool is mainly used for intimidating and judgmental purposes. As a matter of fact, teachers are surprisingly visited by Inspectors and Teaching Advisors. The teacher to be visited is not informed in advance and there is no pre-observation conference. Consequently, peer observations hardly occur insofar as it has been printed in the mind of teachers that visitors come only to downgrade their teaching practices.

Classroom observation practices should change in Benin secondary schools and be geared toward the path of teacher development. To achieve this goal, inspectors and Teaching Advisors should adopt the correct process of classroom observation: inform the visited teacher in advance, have a pre-observation conference, observe classes on some agreed points, hold an intimidation-free post-observation conference, and plan another visit for points that need to be beautified. This being achieved, they will sensitize teachers on the value of classroom observation for their professional

² Direction de l’Inspection Pédagogique, de l’Innovation et de la Qualité

growth. They should make teachers keep in mind that their professional growth is an on-going process insofar as each new answer or solution leads to another new question.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Checklist for observations of vocabulary lessons. (Gebhard 1992, p.2)

A partial Checklist: Observing Vocabulary Lessons		Yes	No
1.	Teacher introduced new vocabulary by		
a.	giving definition	—	—
b.	giving synonyms/antonyms	—	—
c.	teaching prefix/suffix	—	—
d.	giving translation	—	—
e.	having students guess word from the context	—	—
f.	demonstrating meaning through gestures/action	—	—
g.	writing the word in a sentence	—	—
h.	giving sample sentences with the word in it	—	—
i.	other: _____	—	—
2.	Teacher used audiovisual aids:		
a.	realia (things we use every day)	—	—
b.	tape recorder	—	—
c.	flash cards	—	—
d.	overhead projector	—	—
e.	handout	—	—
f.	other: _____	—	—
3.	Teacher taught vocabulary through		
a.	drills	—	—
b.	Total Physical Response	—	—
c.	a game	—	—
d.	crossword puzzles	—	—
e.	information-gap/interview activities	—	—
f.	translation/explanation/lecture	—	—
g.	other: _____	—	—

Appendix B: Checklist for EFL teachers' level in English phonetics and how they manage pronunciation difficulties in their classroom (Houmassè, 2011, p.67)

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST				
<i>This class observation checklist is designed to assess the observed teacher's pronunciation in classroom situation, and check how he/she deals with his/her students' pronunciation errors..</i>				
School:				
Class:				
Size:		Boys:		Girls:
Date:				
Lesson observed:				
Teacher observed:				
No.	EVALUATION CONTENT	YES	NO	COMMENTS
1.	During the lesson the teacher has made pronunciation error by...			
1.1.	missing up English vowel sounds.			
1.2.	pronouncing certain English consonant sounds incorrectly.			
1.3.	stressing individual words incorrectly.			
1.4.	stressing wrong words in a sentence.			
2.	When his students make pronunciation errors during the lesson, the teacher...			
2.1.	does not care.			
2.2.	corrects some of them.			
2.3.	corrects all of them.			
2.4.	corrects immediately.			
2.5.	provides correction only when the same error occurs again.			
2.6.	reacts in a discouraging way.			
2.7.	reacts in an encouraging way.			
3.	In the process of his students' pronunciation errors correction, the teacher...			
3.1.	has, at least once, made use of peer feedback.			
3.2.	has, at least once, worked with transcriptions on the board using the IPA.			
3.3.	has, at least once, used a dictionary.			
3.4.	has, at least once, provided an erroneous feedback.			
Additional comments:				

Appendix C: A tally sheet (Source: Gebhard 1992, p.3)

Content of Questions	to Individual	to Whole Class
• Questions about lives of students	//	//////////
• Questions about people and places in general	/	//////
• Questions about language		////
• Questions about the content of the reading selection		////
(from Gebhard 1991)		

Appendix D: Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to collect data for a research work about classroom observation. Your names will not be revealed, since this is a quantitative research. Extra information, such as e-mail address, and telephone number is required in case any complementary information is necessary, so that the researcher will be able to contact you. Your sincerity in giving answers to the questions and ticking (✓) the box which reflects your personal response will help to have

reliable data.

Participant's C

Date: ____/____/2017

PART ONE: GENERAL INFORMATION

Name (Optional): _____

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Category of teacher: ☐ E ☐ E Part-time teacher ☐

Other (Please specify) ☐ _____

Your highest academic degree in English:

None ☐ DUEL ☐ Licence ☐ Maîtrise ☐

Master ☐ DEA ☐ Doctorat ☐

Other ☐ se specify) _____

Your highest professional degree in the English language teaching:

None ☐ BAPES ☐ CAPES ☐

Other ☐ (Please specify) _____

The school in which you taught last year (2016 – 2017): _____

The school where you have been teaching now (2017 – 2018): _____

Your teaching experience: _____ year(s)

PART TWO: QUESTIONS

Q-1) During the academic year 2016-2017, have you received a classroom observation visit from:

a) an Inspector? No ☐ Yes ☐ _____ time(s)

b) a Teaching Advisor (CP)? No ☐ Yes ☐ _____ time(s)

c) your Head Teachers (AE)? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ _____ time(s)

d) a colleague? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ _____ time(s)

e) other (Please specify) _____ time(s)

Q-2) During the five (5) previous academic years, have you received a classroom observation visit from:

- a) an Inspector? ☐ No ☐ Yes _____ time(s)
- b) a Teaching Advisor (CP)? No ☐ Yes ☐ _____ time(s)
- c) your Head Teachers (AE)? ☐ No ☐ Yes _____ time(s)
- d) a colleague? ☐ No ☐ Yes _____ time(s)
- e) other (Please specify) _____ time(s)

Q-3) During your career of teacher of English as a Foreign Language, have you ever

- a) videotaped or audio taped your own class and reflect on your teaching practices?
☐ No ☐ Yes _____ time(s)
- b) visited on your own initiative, a colleague in a class situation and observed his/her lesson(s)?
☐ No ☐ Yes _____ time(s)

Q-4) In the framework of “formative” classroom visit and observation practices in Benin secondary schools, does the visitor:

- a. inform the teacher to be observed in advance?
☐ No ☐ Yes
- b. have a pre-observation conference with the teacher to be observed?
☐ No ☐ Yes

Q-5) React to the following statements about classroom visits and observations in Benin secondary schools.

On a scale of 1-5, rate the classroom visit and observation practices in Benin secondary schools on the following characteristics. Encircle the corresponding number.					
Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Somewhat Agree 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	
a) The way teacher visits and observations are organized in Benin secondary schools lead to frustration and resentment.					
1	2	3	4	5	
b) Classroom visits and observations in Benin secondary schools promote teacher evaluation and professional growth.					
1	2	3	4	5	
c) Classroom observations in Benin secondary schools are intimidating.					
1	2	3	4	5	
d) Classroom visits and observations in Benin secondary schools are productive, constructive and positive.					
1	2	3	4	5	
e) Classroom visits and observations in Benin secondary schools are judgmental.					
1	2	3	4	5	

Note: If you have any personal opinion about classroom visits and observations in Benin secondary schools, please write it on the back of this paper.

Thank you very much for your kind help and participation.

We appreciate it!

Appendix E: Participants' viewpoints on the statements

Statement a: Observations in Benin Lead to Frustration and Resentment					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	12	10.2	10.2	10.2
	Disagree	34	28.8	28.8	39.0
	Somewhat Agree	46	39.0	39.0	78.0
	Agree	19	16.1	16.1	94.1
	Strongly Agree	7	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Statement b: Observations in Benin Promote Evaluation and Professional Growth					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	4.2	4.2	4.2
	Disagree	4	3.4	3.4	7.6
	Somewhat Agree	29	24.6	24.6	32.2
	Agree	60	50.8	50.8	83.1
	Strongly Agree	20	16.9	16.9	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Statement c: Observations in Benin are Intimidating					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	13	11.0	11.0	11.0
	Disagree	30	25.4	25.4	36.4
	Somewhat Agree	51	43.2	43.2	79.7
	Agree	15	12.7	12.7	92.4
	Strongly Agree	9	7.6	7.6	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Statement d: Observations in Benin are Productive, Constructive and Positive					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	0.8	0.8	0.8
	Disagree	9	7.6	7.6	8.5
	Somewhat Agree	33	28.0	28.0	36.4
	Agree	58	49.2	49.2	85.6
	Strongly Agree	17	14.4	14.4	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Observations in Benin are Judgemental					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	5.1	5.1	5.1
	Disagree	24	20.3	20.3	25.4
	Somewhat Agree	34	28.8	28.8	54.2
	Agree	44	37.3	37.3	91.5
	Strongly Agree	10	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Le présent travail de recherche examine le niveau de conscience des professeurs d'anglais du Bénin, par rapport à l'importance des visites de classes dans le processus de leur développement professionnel. Il doit être placé dans le contexte des stratégies mises en œuvre, afin de rendre plus efficaces et efficientes, les communications orale et écrite dans le processus enseignement/apprentissage de l'anglais au Bénin. Aussi, cette étude vise-t-elle à développer l'esprit critique au niveau de chaque enseignant. Le degré d'engagement des professeurs d'anglais du Bénin dans le processus de leur

développement professionnel a été mesuré à travers un questionnaire adressé à cent dix huit enseignants en situation de classe. Ces derniers ont été choisis au hasard. Les résultats des investigations ont montré que les enseignants de l'anglais au Bénin ne sont pas habitués aux visites de classes. Ils ont une représentation punitive de ces activités académiques, et pensent qu'elles sont la plupart du temps utilisées pour les discréditer. Dans le but de redonner aux visites de classes leur place dans le développement professionnel des enseignants du Bénin, nous avons montré quelques avantages inhérents à elles, avant de suggérer quelques pistes pour leur mise en œuvre efficace, afin de permettre aux enseignants de s'y habituer.

Mots clés: visite de classe ; auto-observation ; observation par les pairs ; développement de l'enseignant.